

THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL

A MONTHLY RECORD AND REVIEW

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF WORSHIP MUSIC IN THE NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES.

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EDITED BY E. MINSHALL,

*Organist and Director of the Music at the City Temple,
London, E.C.*

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Prize Anthem Competition.

It was very gratifying to find that our offer of a prize of Three Guineas, for the best Festival Anthem, induced many well-known composers of Church Music to compete. We cannot give the names of the competitors, but the list includes Doctors of Music, Bachelors of Music, Fellows of the College of Organists, and others whose compositions are frequently heard in our Church services.

The total number of anthems sent in was twenty-eight, and, with a few exceptions, they all exhibited considerable skill in composition—the majority of them far surpassing our expectation. We submitted them all to Dr. E. J. Hopkins, than whom, owing to his long experience and thorough knowledge, there is no more able adjudicator. After carefully studying the MSS. he gave his decision as follows:

DEAR MR. MINSHALL,

Herewith I return the MS. anthems you entrusted to me to adjudicate upon.

I first reduced the total number, twenty-eight, to six, and then to two. From the two inscribed "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" and "Contrafacto," I have had some difficulty in making a selection, as they are both excellent, but have finally decided in favour of the former, "Gloria in Excelsis." I am also much pleased with the anthem signed "Sebastian."

Yours faithfully,

EDWD. J. HOPKINS.

On opening the envelope containing the name and address of the composer, we found that the prize was won by

MR. MATTHEW KINGSTON,

Organist of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church,
Bournemouth.

To that gentleman we have forwarded a cheque for Three Guineas, which he acknowledges as follows:

DEAR SIR,

I have great pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your favour of yesterday, enclosing cheque for Three Guineas, being amount of prize offered by the NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL, for the best anthem for Festival use.

This result, I would like to say, was quite unexpected by me, for I wrote the anthem in a great hurry, in the spare time between teaching duties, but as I am fond of composition, my head and hand were ready.

Once again expressing my pleasure

I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

MATTHEW KINGSTON.

It will be a source of gratification to many of our readers that, although the competition was open to all comers, the prize has been won by a Nonconformist Organist.

The MS. is now in the hands of the printer, and we hope to have a supply of copies very shortly. Choirmasters wanting a really good anthem for either festival or concert use, will find Mr. Kingston's composition well worth their attention.

PAID singers are few and far between in Nonconformist Churches in England. In America almost every church pays a quartette of professional singers. The soprano at Dr. Fulton's church in New York receives £1,000 a year for her services. We hope all our singers will not take the next boat for the United States.

THERE is every prospect of a very successful Festival of the Nonconformist Choir Union at the Crystal Palace on June 7th. The railway companies are arranging to convey the provincial singers to London at a very low rate indeed. For instance, those from Shropshire are to pay 3s. 9d. only for a return ticket. We believe the return fare from the Midlands will be about 2s. 6d. or 3s. The expense, therefore, ought not to stand in the way of many choirs. Such an opportunity for a cheap "outing" is rare. If any choir that wishes to take part in the Festival will inquire at the nearest station, or write direct to the railway company, the exact fare can be ascertained at once. Return tickets from London to the Palace (including admission) are provided free. We hope many choirs will at once determine to join the Union, but as the time for learning the music is getting short, an early application should be made to the Hon. Sec., Mr. T. R. Croger, 114, Wood Street, London, E.C. Choirs from the following towns amongst others will be present: Northampton, Kettering, Wellingborough, Coventry, Ipswich, Folkestone, Bournemouth, Oswestry, Nottingham, Burton-on-Trent,

Westgate-on-Sea, Maulden, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Royston, Poole, Irthlington, St. Helen's, Brighton, Rochester, High Wycombe, Thrapston, Deal, Dover, etc. From London and a circle of twenty miles round, a large number of singers will be present.

THE Welsh people, and those of the border counties, are noted for their singing ability. We were never more impressed with this than when a fortnight ago we happened to be present at the first rehearsal of the Oswestry contingent for the forthcoming Festival. The music was perfectly new to them, and they had no instrumental assistance whatever, but the singers (about fifty in number) went through nearly all the pieces with remarkably few mistakes in reading. There seemed about an equal number of sol-faists and staff singers.

THE choirs belonging to the Union in the Dalston district have formed themselves into an oratorio choir, called "The North London Choral Society." Mr. Arthur Briscoe has been appointed conductor. "Elijah" is the first work to be performed. We wish the new society a long and prosperous life.

A WRITER in the *Northampton Nonconformist* says: "As an illustration of the attractive powers of music, I give the following facts:—Two rough and ready shoemakers, collarless and nearly shoeless, passing College Street Chapel on their way to a night's carousal, were attracted by the strains of the Northamptonshire Nonconformist Choir Union Festival. They stayed and listened outside. Invited to enter they pleaded that which is no bar to a public-house, 'their untidiness and aprons,' 'dirt and dishabille.' Urged to come in, they reluctantly promised, and vanished to a pump not far off, and in a few minutes returned with cleaner faces, and with shy gait and awkward manner entered the chapel. Their earnest attention during the rest of the evening showed that nothing but good had resulted from their musical 'bout.'"

MR. MINSHALL visited Trowbridge and Frome last month, and gave a lecture, entitled "A Talk on Church Music," illustrations being given by the choirs. We are glad to hear from friends at these places that his visit has awakened both choirs and congregations to a fresh interest in the worship music of our churches.

A WRITER in the *British Weekly* of March 21st, who had attended three services in London the previous Sunday, speaking of the singing at the City Temple, says: "It was grand—swelling loud above organ and brass instruments: this last innovation, by the way, however doubtful in prospect being a decided success in fact." In the afternoon, at St. James's Hall, the brass band did not please him, for he says, it "did not strike me as quite devotional," and "pieces were played which were not dis-

tinctively sacred." In the evening he went to Dr. Monro Gibson's church, where the singing, "though fully slow, partook of the general heartiness of the service."

Reminiscences of an Organist.

(Continued from page 37.)

THE most "shaky" concert I ever had anything to do with, took place on the *Circassian*, on the North Atlantic Ocean, about 1,500 miles from land. The proceeds of the entertainment were divided between the Sailors' Home in Liverpool and Miss Macpherson's Home for Children in London. The following was the announcement which was posted in various parts of the ship:—"Programme of an entertainment to be given this evening. Chairman: Lord Beaconsfield. Vocalists: Madame Nilsson, Madame Patti, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Santley. Pianist: Mons. Donajowski; Recitations by Mr. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., and the Marquis of Lorne. Carriages may be ordered at 10 o'clock." As may be presumed, these celebrated personages failed to "produce their appearance," and imaginary telegrams were received from them accounting for their absence. Lord Beaconsfield was too busily engaged in finding out how the English farmer could compete with the American farmer; Mr. Gladstone had so many post cards to write that it was impossible to leave home; Mr. Sims Reeves had a severe cold, which caused him to disappoint the audience—the first time it had happened in the whole of his career! The originators of the concert, therefore, had to fall back upon the resources the ship offered. Sir Leonard Tilly (Chancellor of the Exchequer for Canada) presided, and Sir Charles Tupper made a clever speech. Several ladies and gentlemen offered their services as vocalists; and I was requested to conduct, and do what little drilling was necessary to make the songs "go." The audience numbered about two hundred and fifty, and the proceeds amounted to £24. The carriages, like the artists, were not there at the appointed hour. The captain was kind enough to offer wheelbarrows or planks to those who were particularly anxious to leave for shore; but the offer was declined with thanks.

The conductor of a ballad concert feels a kind of "sinking" when the hour for commencing has struck and not one of his vocalists has turned up! Such was my experience upon one occasion. I had very meekly to ask the audience to have patience for a few minutes. All the singers presumed that their first song would be third or fourth on the programme, so they did not hurry.

There is an inconvenience of singers leaving early as well as arriving late. The most painful case of this kind I ever experienced was when I had positively to send a lady home owing to her inability to fulfil her engagement. During her first song I thought something was wrong, but before the time arrived for her to sing her second song ("Angels ever bright and fair") I found that she had been imbibing too freely, and that

the effects were becoming more apparent. To allow a person in that state to sing such a song—or any song, in fact—would be most injudicious, to say the least of it; so I quietly persuaded the singer to go home, though I had some difficulty in so doing.

I have sometimes (not often, fortunately) had queer experiences when I have been in the country giving organ recitals, etc. Partly out of kindness to me (thinking I should prefer it to an hotel), and partly to cut down expenses (and thus assist the church funds), some friend has offered to "take me in" for the night. Occasionally I certainly have been "taken in!" Once when I gave a recital in the afternoon, and a second one in the evening, besides accompanying all the vocal music, my host and hostess provided nothing but sausages and cheese for my supper! After four hours' hard work I felt quite "done up," and should have been thankful for a substantial meal. I had, however, to content myself with the indigestible sausages, which, I am willing to believe, were provided as a treat for me.

At another place, after a practice with the choir and a long concert, every vocal item in which I accompanied, besides playing several solos, I was regaled with cold fat pickled pork and a cup of coffee!

The most flagrant case of this kind I shall never forget to my dying day. Through a friend, a certain church in the country was introduced to me as being in great need of funds and most deserving of help, and I was requested to consent to go and give an organ recital, "free, gratis, and for nothing," except that my expenses would be paid. Believing it to be a case worthy of support, I agreed to go on a certain day in December. When the day came, it was bitterly cold, there being a hard frost and biting wind. I was instructed to take train for — station, where I should be met and driven to my destination (a distance of six miles). On my arrival at the station I looked out for a conveyance, but there was none. It was clear the promise to meet me had not been remembered. On inquiry, I found there was a carrier's cart just starting for —. This was a very rickety concern, with a poor horse and most uncomfortable seats. I was the only passenger. It was a bright moonlight night, but the cold was intense, and by the time I got to my journey's end, I felt frozen to death. I made my way to the Minister's house, but he seemed surprised to see me, and he knew nothing of the arrangements made for meeting and entertaining me. He, however, gave me some tea, for which I was duly thankful. After tea I was taken to the chapel, where, for two hours, I had to fight with a wheezy old organ, the notes of which would persist in sticking down in twos and threes at a time! From the chapel I was taken, with half-a-dozen others, to a gentleman's house to supper, which was very acceptable. Towards twelve o'clock I was beginning to be anxious as to where I was to put up for the night, but there was no sign of the party breaking up. Near upon one o'clock the gentleman of the house said he would escort me to the house where I was

to stay. Arriving there, I found it was a lodging-house, with anything but a comfortable look, kept by a very dingy old maid. At this time of night there was no alternative but to put up with it. My bedroom was not half furnished; the door would not shut; the bed was not aired, and the bedclothes were hardly sufficient for a night in August. Not a wink of sleep did I get. In the morning, breakfast was prepared for me in the "dining room." It consisted of coffee (the black pot off the fire being placed on the table) and a newly-laid egg, about which the old lady made a great fuss, as if I had never had such a delicacy in my life before. While I was "enjoying" the sumptuous repast, a youth was ushered in, and he informed me he had come to pay my expenses. "What are they?" said he. "Seven and eightpence," I replied, this being the exact sum paid for travelling. I was handed eight shillings, and the youth requested the fourpence change! I swallowed my breakfast as quickly as I could, and made my way back to London at the earliest possible moment, vowing that never again would I visit that church, either for love or money.

I might give many instances of unusual kindness and most generous hospitality being shown to me, but space forbids. I will only say that, on these little excursions into various parts of the country, I have made many friends, and have generally returned home all the better for the intercourse with those whom I have visited.

The London Sunday School Choir.

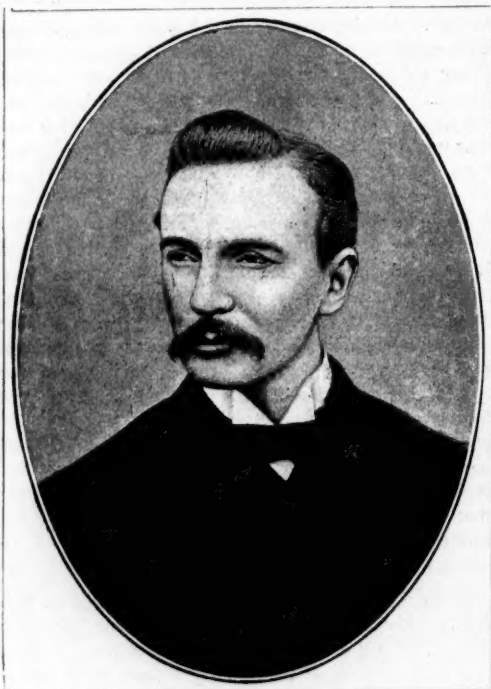
THE Annual Spring Festival was held at the Albert Hall on the 22nd ult., when a choir of 1,400 voices, accompanied by the band, rendered a portion of the programme that was given at the Crystal Palace in June last. The part-songs were tastefully sung, and the anthems went well, especially Garrett's "Praise ye the Lord." The rendering of Schubert's lovely setting of Psalm xxiii. was not satisfactory. We are exceedingly glad to note the progress of the choir, and it is perfectly right to gradually raise the standard of the music they sing; but it is a great mistake to give them compositions clearly far beyond their abilities. We admire their ambition, but we venture to think that it would be wiser to keep their programmes more within the powers of Sunday School choirs.

The choir band is certainly progressing very nicely. Their performances (conducted by Mr. Frank Jolly), though not perfect, did them credit, and their accompaniments were very helpful to the choir.

The solo vocalists were Miss Alice Gomez and Miss Kate Cove, both of whom sang so well as to be encored after each appearance.

Mr. Arthur Payne gave as a violin solo a capital rendering of the Andante and Finale from Mendelssohn's Concerto, and so greatly did the audience appreciate it that an encore was inevitable.

Mr. Luther Hinton conducted with his well-known ability. Unfortunately, owing to the sudden death of his father, Mr. David Davies, the esteemed and capable organist, was unable to be at his usual post. Mr. Horace G. Holmes was therefore at the organ. Mr. Fountain Meen was at the piano, and accompanied with his accustomed taste.



Music at Victoria Wesleyan Chapel, Manchester.

WE think it will be readily conceded that for some years past our Wesleyan friends have been conspicuous amongst religious denominations for the amount of energy, enterprise, and money devoted to the purposes of their *forward* movement, and we confess to a feeling of admiration when about six o'clock on a recent Sunday evening we arrived in front of the substantial and somewhat elegant buildings which comprise the property of this church. They include chapel, schools, minister's and caretaker's houses. These, with the land, have cost, within a shade, the sum of £16,500. Having about half an hour to spare, we devoted the time to an inspection of the premises, which are built of stone. The style is an early period of Gothic, and there is a lofty, elegant, and well-proportioned spire, which is decidedly an ornament to the locality. The doors being already open, we entered the chapel, which is galleried throughout, the neat and appropriately designed organ occupying a recess behind the rather handsome pulpit.

Mr. Henry Coupe, the organist and choirmaster, whose portrait accompanies this notice, having arrived, we made known to him the object of our visit, and were courteously invited to inspect and try the organ ere the time for service. The instrument contains three manuals, twenty-four speaking stops, five couplers, and the usual composition pedals. We found the voicing very good, the diapasons being exceedingly satisfactory both as regards quality and volume of tone. The swell is also very effective. A swell to choir coupler

instead of the choir to great would be a great improvement. The time for service drawing near, we went to our place in the gallery, where we elected to sit, and shortly afterwards Mr. Coupe began to play the opening voluntary, an Andante from a Sonata by Mailly. It is one of those quiet, soothing, melodious pieces, so admirably adapted for this purpose, and being only recently published will prove quite a boon to organists seeking something new. Mr. Coupe played it in good taste, and we were sorry that time would not permit him to let us hear the entire movement. The choir now came into their places in a quiet, orderly manner, from the vestry set apart for their assembly. This is a good plan where the necessary convenience is provided. We were informed that the choir numbers some twenty-four voices, all voluntary, except one paid lady soprano. The attendance this evening was only sixteen, say, eight trebles, two altos, three tenors, and three basses. The parts were, therefore, rather out of balance. Absentees to the extent of one-third seems rather a heavy proportion.

The opening hymn was "O worship the King!" sung to *Hanover*. This was heartily sung, choir and congregation keeping nicely together. The verse commencing "Frail children of dust" was sung with proper feeling, Mr. Coupe's organ part being in excellent keeping.

Next in order came a brief prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer, in which the people heartily joined. This is as it should be. Why should it be delegated to the minister or choir?

The chanting of the "Magnificat" followed, to very excellent music composed by the organist. This was well sung, and most effective use was made of the organ. The verse, "He remembering His mercy," was sung without accompaniment and formed a pleasing and appropriate contrast to the Gloria.

The long prayer and the lesson were succeeded by the hymn "Christian, seek not yet repose," to the tune *Camberwell*. This was given with due attention to expression, and proved a pleasant number in the order of service. At the conclusion of this hymn Mr. Coupe played on for a short time, using some of the soft stops with commendable taste, and we were pleased to observe that the minister betrayed no signs of impatience, but sat and listened. This has not always been our experience. We have found the minister on some occasions standing as if in protest. If the few bars are properly treated, we maintain that the effect, generally speaking, is good, and the really very short space of time occupied need not disturb the equanimity of the minister. The sermon came next, lasting about forty-five minutes. This was followed by the well-known "quarterly collection," during which the choir sang an anthem, "Turn Thy face away from my sins," by Attwood. This was carefully given in every sense. They kept well together, and the pitch was maintained even when Mr. Coupe left them to sing the closing movement without the support of the organ. The solos were fairly sung by the lady soprano, and the organ was most judiciously used throughout.

After a short prayer we sang the closing hymn, 'Saviour, again to Thy dear Name we raise,' to Hopkins's beautiful tune *Ellers*. This went very well indeed, the expression being carefully attended to. Previous to pronouncing the Benediction, the minister said there would be a short prayer-meeting held at the close of the service. In consequence of this we had not the opportunity of listening to a closing voluntary, the Overture to the "Occasional Oratorio," which Mr. Coupe intended to play. We enjoyed the service on the whole, but we think there is room for one more hymn or chant.

Mr. Coupe uses his organ with considerable freedom, which is right, as it encourages the people to sing, but he does not lose sight of the words sung. He softens down the organ at the right places, and even withdraws it altogether at times, with good effect. The choir do not sing with great contrast. This tends to keep the congregation singing, as we have often found the people to cease when the choir sing very softly.

They have an extensive *répertoire* of sacred music here, and the church may be congratulated on having the praise portion of the service in such efficient hands.

Hymnody.

BY THE REV. W. TIDD MATSON.

(Continued from page 41.)

It is interesting to note how the more stirring epochs and movements that have marked the history of the Christian Church have been those especially fruitful of the inspirations of hymnody. To the spirit evoked by the struggles in the early Church between heresy and orthodoxy we may trace the hymns of Ephraem Syrus, and Ambrose, and Prudentius. Out of the fervent if mistaken zeal which was prompted by the Crusades, sprang to life and beauty the hymns of the two Bernards. The holy fire of the Reformation gave being to the glorious hymnody of Germany, which, starting forth with the deep organ notes of Luther, continued to breathe on in the softer and sweeter strains of Rinkart, Paul Gerhardt, Neumark, and Tersteegen, and deriving its own peculiar colouring from the Pietistic movement, was still perpetuated by the lays of Neander, Zinzendorf, and Gellert, and still survives in that marvellous land of literature, in many a devout and spiritual song. To French Quietism we owe the sacred poems of Madame Guyon, many of which have been so admirably rendered by Cowper. While in our own country, Puritanism, Methodism, the Evangelical and Tractarian movements in the Episcopal Church, and modern Revivalism have all of them had their poetic representatives, who have enriched, by the outpourings of their genius and enthusiasm, the stores of English hymnody.

Of course the main interest for ourselves centres in the hymnody of England, nor can that of any other country display aught ampler, richer, nobler. And yet the greatest names that adorn our literature are strangely absent from it. We have no hymn of Shakespeare's, though there are many passages in his

writings which show that he was not without his religious sensibilities. Spenser has written two so-called hymns, to "Heavenly Love" and "Heavenly Beauty," but these are in no sense hymns, as we are now considering them, namely, as songs employed in the worship of God. Milton, indeed, composed one of the finest hymns in the language, "The Morning Hymn of Adam in Paradise," but if for nothing else, the blank verse metre, unsuited to musical accompaniment, places it altogether out of our present category. The same remark will apply to Thomson's grand hymn at the close of his poem on the Seasons, and to that of Coleridge "Before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni." Pope tried his hand at a hymn in his "Universal Prayer," and Byron, in imitation of it, in his "Prayer of Nature," and the result, I have no hesitation in saying, was very sorry stuff in both instances. Shelley might have written hymns of unrivalled splendour, for in the lyric gift he stands among poets unsurpassed, while his soul was steeped in the very spirit of worship; but he turned aside in his youth from Christianity, disgusted at the false aspects in which it was presented to him, and hence lavished that boundless wealth of genius on the worship of a personified abstraction, which might else have flowed out in homage and adoration to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As for Keats, he was a nineteenth-century pagan, and it is not to his luscious muse that we must look for any help to our devotion. Wordsworth, Southey, Browning, Tennyson, they are not to be numbered among our hymnists. The first, indeed, has given us the "Labourer's Noon-day Hymn;" but it is a poem to be read, not a lyric to be sung; and though some of our recent compilers of hymnals have included in their collections a few of the introductory stanzas to the Laureate's "In Memoriam," we feel that they have been influenced by the desire to drag in something from Tennyson, rather than by any suitability of the verses (broken off in the middle to their great detriment) to the song-worship of the Church.

Dryden and Cowper, and I may add Thomas Moore, are about the only exceptions to the general lack of hymnic power among our more highly distinguished poets; to all three of whom we are certainly indebted for hymns of imperishable beauty.

And yet what a glorious band of saintly hymnists our land can boast! I know that an immense amount of doggrel has been perpetrated under the names of Psalmody and Hymnody, beginning with Sternhold and Hopkins, who, without intending it, did their best to murder the Psalms of David, and who were perhaps more suitably employed when in like fashion they did into rhyme the Athanasian Creed.

"What man soever he be that
Salvation would attain,
The Catholic Belief, he must
Before all things maintain," etc.

Nor, indeed, has the race of doggrel-mongers ceased to flourish, as may be patent to any one who will turn to a volume called "Sacred Songs and Solos," bearing the names on the title-page of Sankey and Bliss, and which in some quarters has obtained a most marvellous popularity, showing that even in this nineteenth century, vulgarity of taste and hysterical sentimentality, to say

nothing of very questionable religious and ethical teaching, need not despair of finding their own extensive market. But after discarding all the doggerel that has gone by the name of Hymns, what a teeming mine of pure gold remains! Methodism of course must bear the palm, boasting as she does of that prince of hymnists, Charles Wesley; to say nothing of the fine translations from German writers by her venerable founder. But, apart from the Wesleys, it is to Methodism that we owe "The God of Abraham praise," that magnificent ode by the self-educated shoemaker, Thomas Olivers, and which, among hymns composed of express purpose to be sung in divine worship, has nothing to equal it in the English language.

Congregational Independency, I think, ranks next to Methodism on the score of hymnic riches. Doddridge, Watts, Hart, Collyer, Conder, Lynch, Andrew Reed, Paxton Hood, George Rawson—what hymnal could afford to do without them? Our Baptist friends may boast them of Grigg, and Swain, and Medley, and Fawcett, and Robert Robinson, and Ryland, and other noble singers, whose hymns will ring along the avenues of Time for ever. Old Puritanism stands represented by Wither and Baxter. Moravianism by that true poet and true patriot, James Montgomery. Presbyterianism by the much-slandered Logan, and by that saintly man who has just departed from us, Horatius Bonar. And Unitarianism has no need to blush among the denominations while she can point to James Martineau, and Sir John Bowring, and Thomas Hornblower Gill, and William Johnson Fox, and John Page Hopps; and to that gifted twain belonging to the poetic sisterhood, Anna Letitia Barbauld and Sarah Flower Adams.

Nor is it to Protestant Nonconformity alone that English Hymnody is indebted. Roman Catholicism has given us the fine lyrics of Faber and Newman, while the Established Episcopal Church has, throughout her history, furnished a series of illustrious hymnists who in themselves were sufficient to have immortalized the hymnody of any country. Among the older singers I may name fervid Jeremy Taylor, and holy George Herbert, and Bishop Ken, whose Morning and Evening Hymns have pealed out continuously beneath the rafters of every English Christian home. Then later on we have Cowper, and Newton, and Haweis, and Toplady, and Mant, and Gerard Noel; until in the full stream of modern song ring out upon us the strains of Milman, and Heber, and Grant, and Lyte, and Alford, and Bishop Wordsworth, and Anstice, and Monsell, and Keble, and Stanley, and the still living John Ellerton and Godfrey Thring to perpetuate the tuneful band.

But why speak of these children of the sacred lyre under their denominational headings? The very mention of their names serves in itself sufficiently to show that hymnody is of no sect, party, or denomination. The sects indeed have their hymnals, but the songs of these singers, or most of them, have a place in them all. The most protesting of Protestants can join with Newman in his "Lead, kindly Light." The most orthodox among Trinitarians can take up the strain of Bowring, "In the cross of Christ I glory," or breathe out with Sarah Flower Adams her passionate aspiration, "Nearer, my God, to Thee." The stoutest defender of establishments may unite with the Voluntarist Binney in singing,

"Eternal Light, Eternal Light;" the sturdiest Liberator will not refuse at eventide to lift up his heart with Keble in "Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear;" while the extreme Ritualist may join hands with the Quaker Barton over the Bible as they sing together, "Lamp of our feet." It is here in the hymnody of the Church that we find the prayer of the Saviour answered: "That they all may be one, even as We are one." The pulpit may sometimes find a place for bigotry, the religious Press for the heated fires of denunciation and controversy, but in the Grand Song-Temple of Worship—the noise and strife and din and tumult are left far without; there the Spirit of love, joy, peace, broods over the scene on gentle hovering wing, and fills all the atmosphere with His breath of hallowed calm. The Lord of the temple is there in the midst of His adoring choir, and every heart beats in unison, and every voice blends in harmony one with the other.

The increased attention which has of late years been given to the study of hymns and hymnology, and the improved character which marks so many of our recent hymnals augurs well, I think, for the future of English hymnody. A perfect hymnal is indeed, and perhaps will be for some time to come, still a desideratum. Whether the greater poets of the Future, unlike those of the Past, will fling their genius and their energy into the song-worship of the Church, we cannot tell; but of this we may rest assured, that the race of sacred singers is not extinct, and while time shall last it will never die out.

As Anastasius Grun sings of poets in general, so we may repeat of these in particular:—

"Long as the Spring brings greenness,
And roses shed their light;
While cheeks with smiles are dimpled,
And eyes with joy are bright;

"While sepulchres are gloomy
With cypress growing by;
So long as hearts are broken,
And a tear-drop dims the eye:

"So long on earth will sojourn
The God of sacred song;
By Him inspired, rejoicing,
The Poet moves along.

"And singing and rejoicing,
Through all the earth you'll find
That the last of all the Poets
Is the last of all mankind.

"God's hand still holds creation,
The earth, and moon, and sun;
Like a fresh and opening blossom,
He smiles and looks thereon.

"And when this giant posy
Shall bloom into decay,
And earth and glowing sunspheres
As flower-dust pass away:

"Then ask, if lust to question
Be still within you strong,
If yet is terminated
The old eternal song."

Terminated? No! Not even then; for then the poetry and the music which have hallowed man's

pathway on earth, will still, entwined together, be prolonged in universal chorus in heaven; and the whole grand bardic throng in innumerable multitude will join their voices in one resounding concert of praise as they swell the exultant measure of the endless Hallelujah!

A Celebrated Nonconformist Organist: Benjamin Jacob, of Surrey Chapel.

By F. G. EDWARDS.

SURREY CHAPEL is rich in historic musical interest. The building, which stood at the corner of Blackfriars Road and Charlotte Street, London, was erected by the celebrated Rev. Rowland Hill, and opened for Divine worship on June 8th, 1783. The chapel was ugly and unattractive externally, being built of brick and devoid of ornamentation; but internally there was little to offend the eye. The dome-shaped roof, supported by high pillars, and surmounted by a cupola; the sixteen large unstained windows, which admitted much light; the pleasantly tinted walls; the three-decker pulpit, with the gilt-piped organ behind it; produced an effect of brightness about the inside in pleasing contrast to the grimy appearance of the outside of this venerable sanctuary.

There were some peculiar features about the building. It was octagonal in form, because of Rowland Hill's preference for a circular building; "in order," as he said, "that the devil could not occupy any corners." The artificial lighting of the chapel by candles in the ante-gas days could not have been altogether satisfactory, as we are told that some of the congregation brought their own candles. There was never any heating apparatus, the tradition being that with "pulpit fire" any artificial warmth was unnecessary. In the early days there were no backs to the seats in the gallery; and to the last many of the free seats in the area were backless and very narrow, while the letable pews had perfectly straight backs and afforded very little room for the knees. On looking down from the spacious gallery which surrounded the chapel, the spectator was surprised at the narrow tortuous aisles in the area: he wondered how the people could get into their pews, and, having got there and shut the doors, how they would ever manage to get out again. The pulpit, a very high one of the pepper-box type, was flanked on each side by a smaller one, for the reader and the clerk respectively; all three boxes seemed very tight-fitting when their occupants were shut in. There was no waste of room in old Surrey Chapel.

At the request of Rowland Hill, who was an ordained deacon, but not a priest, of the Established Church, the beautiful liturgy of the Church of England was read at every service. The "reader" was clad in the orthodox surplice and stole; but the black gown was the prescribed garb for all pulpit utterances. A clerk led the responses, even so recently as the year 1875, when the last holder of the clerk's office—Carter Bunn Benn, by name—responded to the call of death. "Surrey," as it was familiarly called, always remained an undenominational church holding evangelical views and doctrines, while using the liturgy of the Established Church.

Surrey Chapel had three ministers: Rowland Hill;

James Sherman; and the Rev. Newman Hall, who is still hale and hearty. It had six organists: John Immyns, 1793-94; Benjamin Jacob, 1794-1825; Mr. David Heward (a pupil of Jacob's), 1825-49; Mrs. Francis (Mr. Heward's daughter), 1849-67; Mr. T. W. Horn, 1867-73; and the present writer from 1873-76, when he migrated with the congregation to the new church, Christ Church, Westminster Road.

For the first ten years of its existence Surrey Chapel was without an organ. The introduction of an instrument (in 1793) was not altogether approved by the congregation. The minister who preached at its formal inauguration was a certain Mr. Bull, and, John Bull like, he has a little grumble at the organ and organist. He thus writes to his son:—

"When I came to the chapel, instead of beginning at the proper time [it was the Tuesday evening service] they waited a quarter of an hour for Dr. Dupuis, the King's organist, who at length, with the organ-builder, made his appearance. The chapel was very full indeed. The organ was played four times. All the serious people were exceedingly grieved and affronted; so much so that Mr. Neale [one of the trustees] said he had a great mind to send in the books, and throw up the charge. Indeed, all were affronted except the carnal world, who came in great numbers to hear the music. I had ten minutes to pray in, and fifteen minutes for my sermon. To be sure, the music was delightful, but everybody that belongs to the chapel was annoyed; and poor Mr. Hill was in such a taking, and his wife too, that I thought he would have gone mad. We came home all in dudgeon with each other; but I don't think they need have been so very angry as they were."

Rowland Hill had some fears about organ performances, for he writes to his clerical friend thus:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER BULL,

"How you must think of my treatment last Tuesday evening, when his Majesty's tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum man interrupted our worship; and that after such a serious introduction of singing with our organ which we enjoyed the Sabbath before. Pride must have its fall, and for the future all the tweedle-dums that Kings love they shall keep among themselves. Their fine airs will never do for a Methodist meeting house. And so, farewell to the first and last of the business.

"Brother Bull, thanks, a thousand thanks, for your last visit. The people sucked it in very greedily. That proves they desired the 'sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.' . . .

"Past ten o'clock; eyes half shut; mind marvellously stupid; spirit much exhausted, and candles burning to waste. I shall, therefore, save the best part of a halfpenny if I finish directly.

"Yours very gratefully and affectionately,

"R. HILL.

"Madam Hill's love to Madam Bull."

This letter is dated: "London some day, I know not what, in the month of February, 1793, and here ends my present knowledge."

However, in course of time Rowland Hill and his

people not only became reconciled to, but proud of, their organ, which continued to be one of the great attractions of Surrey Chapel long after his death.

The music of "Surrey" was very celebrated in the olden time. Several of the aged members, most of them now gone to their rest, have told me with emotion of the powerful effect of the music in those former days; and as with tear-moistened eye and quivering lip they recounted their experiences, I could not help feeling how precious were the holy memories and happy associations connected with the music that resounded within those venerated walls.

The organ chiefly associated with Jacob was built about 1800, by Thomas Elliot, whose daughter married William Hill. Elliot afterwards took Hill into partnership, and the firm subsequently became the well-known one of William Hill & Son. The instrument was considered very fine. I have often heard some of the old people speak of its brilliant Trumpet stop. It stood in the gallery behind the pulpit, and was replaced by a more modern instrument, by Willis, in 1857. The following is a probable description of Elliot's organ, for which I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Hill, Elliot's grandson:—

GREAT ORGAN: *Compass* GG (no G♯), to F.—Open Diapason No. 1, Open Diapason No. 2, Stopped Diapason, Principal, 12th, 15th, Sesquialtera, Trumpet.

SWELL: *Compass* Fiddle G to F.—Open Diapason, Stopped Diapason, Principal, Oboe.

PEDAL.—One Octave of Open Pipes GG.

It is now time to leave the organ and turn to its most celebrated player.

BENJAMIN JACOB, the son of an amateur violinist, was born in London in 1778. At a very early age he was taught the rudiments of music by his father. When seven years old he received lessons in singing from Robert Willoughby, a well-known chorus-singer, and became a chorister at Portland Chapel. He sang at the Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey, in 1791. At eight years of age he learned to play upon the harpsichord, and afterwards studied that instrument and the organ under William Shrubsole, organist of Spa Fields Chapel and composer of *Miles's Lane*, and Matthew Cooke, organist of St. George's, Bloomsbury. When he was ten he became organist of Salem Chapel, Soho, and little more than a year afterwards organist of Carlisle Chapel, Kennington Lane. From 1790-94 he was organist of Bentinck Chapel, Lisson Grove, a chapel-of-ease to St. Marylebone.

We thus see that Jacob was a clever boy. He was organist of a chapel at ten, and at eleven he could play readily from the full scores of Handel, which he preferred to the use of any arrangement in accompanying. His ear was remarkably accurate. When he was twelve he tuned Haydn's pianoforte so well that, when visiting England, Haydn repeatedly asked young Jacob to tune it again. In 1796 he studied harmony under Dr. Arnold, organist of Westminster Abbey, who subsequently invited his pupil to become his deputy. Four years later he conducted a series of oratorios given under the direction of Bartleman in Cross Street, Hatton Garden. He became an Associate of the Philharmonic Society in 1828.

The great event in Jacob's life happened to him at the age of sixteen, when, in 1794, Rowland Hill invited him to become organist of Surrey Chapel—an appointment he held for upwards of thirty years. His yearly salary was twenty guineas, which was afterwards raised to forty guineas, and this stipend was paid to his successors.

We have it on the authority of Samuel Wesley that Jacob was a very fine organist. He was frequently engaged to "open" organs; on one of these occasions, at Birmingham, he received a fee of fifty pounds. He was often asked to be umpire at organists' competitions. One of his adjudications is of special interest, in that in 1819 he recommended the late James Turle as organist of Christ Church, Blackfriars Road.

(To be continued.)

The North London Presbyterian Choir Association.

THE Annual Festival Service of this Association was held in St. John's Wood Church on Tuesday, February 25th. Sixteen choirs, numbering about three hundred voices altogether, assembled and completely filled the galleries. The tenors and basses were massed round the organ, and the sopranos and contraltos at the pulpit end of the church. Mr. H. L. Fulkerson, precentor of Regent Square Chapel, conducted, and Mr. F. G. Edwards accompanied. The body of the church was crowded with an appreciative congregation.

The opening voluntary was played by Mr. Cuthbert Harris, F.C.O., of Haverstock Hill Church. The first hymn was "Glory be to God the Father," which was sung with great spirit to Smart's thoroughly congregational tune, *Regent Square*. Blackie's hymn, "Angels, holy," was sung to *Seraphim*, the organ harmonies being written by Dr. E. J. Hopkins. This was well rendered, the unison verses especially being very effective. Sir Arthur Sullivan's anthem arrangement of "Lead, kindly Light" (certainly not so good as some other settings), was taken unaccompanied, and was carefully sung. The chant was not very satisfactory, the recitation passages being occasionally indistinct. It was likewise too slow. The chief anthem was Mendelssohn's "As the hart pants," and it went fairly well. A little more attention to expression marks would have been an improvement. During the offertory, Mr. Fred J. Hunt, of Camden Road Chapel, played a voluntary. The hymn, "In the hour of trial," which was sung unaccompanied, suffered in consequence of some hesitation in commencing one of the verses. After the Benediction, Stainer's Sevenfold Amen was given, but again there was an uncertainty in beginning, and the tenors were not sure of their notes. The closing voluntary was played by Mr. William T. Wren, of Hampstead.

Was it necessary to make such a long pause between every verse of the hymns? It was monotonous, and seemed rather to break the continuity.

As the choirs had had only one united rehearsal, the result was certainly satisfactory. The parts seemed well balanced and the singing generally was good. Mr. Fulkerson conducted intelligently, and Mr. Edwards's accompaniments were sympathetic.

The Revs. J. T. McGaw, P. Carmichael, and Dr. Monro Gibson took part, the latter giving a very interesting address on the importance of the Service of Praise. Mr. Wales, the President of the Association, made a short statement.

Nonconformist Church Organs.

WESLEY CHAPEL, FROME.

Rebuilt by W. J. Grant, Frome.

[Marked thus, *, are new stops.]

Great Organ.

3½ in. pressure.

1. Double Diapason	16 ft. metal	CC to G
2. Open Diapason	8 ft. metal	CC to G
*3. Horn Diapason	8 ft. metal	CC to G
*4. Gamba	8 ft. metal	CC to G
5. Clarabella	8 ft. wood	CC to G
*6. Viene Flute	8 ft. wood	C to G
*7. Harmonic Flute	4 ft. metal	CC to G
8. Principal	4 ft. metal	CC to C
9. Twelfth	3 ft. metal	CC to G
10. Fifteenth	2 ft. metal	CC to G
*11. Mixture (3 ranks) various		CC to G
*12. Double Trumpet	16 ft. metal	C to G
13. Trumpet	8 ft. metal	CC to G
*14. Clarion	4 ft. metal	CC to G

Swell Organ.

3½ in. pressure.

15. Double Diapason	16 ft. wood and metal	CC to G
16. Open Diapason	8 ft. metal	CC to G
17. Stopped Diapason	8 ft. wood	CC to G
18. Gamba	8 ft. metal	C to G
19. Voix Celeste	8 ft. metal	C to G
20. Principal	4 ft. metal	CC to G
21. Fifteenth	2 ft. metal	CC to G
22. Mixture	3 ranks metal	CC to G
23. Bassoon (prepared)	16 ft. metal	CC to G
24. Horn	8 ft. metal	CC to G
25. Oboe	8 ft. metal	CC to G
26. Clarion (prepared)	4 ft. metal	CC to G

Choir Organ.

3½ in. pressure.

27. Open Diapason (prepared)	8 ft. metal	CC to G
28. Dulciana	8 ft. metal	CC to G
29. Lieblich Gedackt	8 ft. metal	CC to G
30. Keraulophon (prepared)	8 ft. metal	CC to G
31. Suabe Flute	4 ft. wood	CC to G
32. Piccolo	2 ft. metal	CC to G

Solo Organ.

5 in. pressure.

*33. Harmonic Flute (prepared)	8 ft. metal	CC to G
*34. Tuba	8 ft. metal	CC to G
35. Cremona	8 ft. metal	C to G
36. Vox Humana (separate Swell Box)	8 ft. metal	CC to G

Pedal Organ.

3½ in. and 5 in. pressure.

*37. Harmonic Bass	32 ft. wood	CCCC to F
38. Open Diapason	16 ft. wood	CCC to F
39. Bourdon	16 ft. wood	CCC to F
40. Violin (prepared)	16 ft. metal	CCC to F
*41. Violoncello	8 ft. wood and metal	CCC to F
*42. Principal	8 ft. metal	CCC to F
*43. Trombone	16 ft. metal	CCC to F

Couplers.

44. Swell to Great.	50. Solo to Pedal.
45. Choir to Great.	51. Choir to Pedal.
46. Solo to Great.	52. Swell Super Octave.
47. Swell to Choir.	53. Pedal Super Octave.
48. Great to Pedal.	54. Tremulant Swell.
49. Swell to Pedals.	55. Tremulant Solo.

The Organ, when completed, will contain over 2,500 Pipes.

Composition Pedals.

Three to Great; three to Swell; two to Solo; two to Pedal.

The Pedal and Solo Soundboards are constructed on the Patent Tubular Pneumatic System.

Tubular Pneumatic is also applied to Drawstop Action.

The Key-fittings and Drawstop Jams are constructed according to College of Organists' recommendations.

The various pressures of wind are obtained from two reservoirs and one main bellows, which are constructed to plans adopted by the late Messrs. Schulze.

A Novel Service of Song.

SERVICES of song are popular, but they are not very general, owing to the difficulty of providing the congregation with the words; and when the ordinary service gives place to a special service of this nature, it is most desirable that the people should know exactly what is taking place. To meet this necessity, Mr. J. M. Hutcheson, of George Square Church, Greenock, has prepared from the "Congregational Church Hymnal" (the book in use in that church), several services, details of which are printed and distributed amongst the congregation. The last, which was given on the 2nd ult., was as follows:—

ELIJAH: A SERVICE OF SONG.

THEME.	SCRIPTURE READINGS.	HYMNS, ETC.
Opening Hymn		Hymn 506
Famine	James v. 17. 1 Kings xvii. 1-7.	Hymn 666
	Luke iv. 25-6. 1 Kings xvii. 8-16.	Hymn 333
	Heb. xi. 25. 1 Kings xvii. 17-24.	Hymn 622
Mount Carmel	Heb. i. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 1, 2, 17-21.	Hymn 375
	1 Kings xviii. 22-37.	Chant 66
	1 Kings xviii. 38-9.	Anthem 27
Wilderness	James v. 18. 1 Kings xviii. 40-46.	Chant 57
	Heb. xi. 38. 1 Kings xix. 1-8.	Anthem 42
	Exod. iii. 1. 1 Kings xix. 9-14, 18.	Chant 73
	1 Kings xix. 19-21.	Hymn 399
Translation	Heb. xi. 5. 2 Kings ii. 1-6.	Hymn 380
	{ Mal. iii. 1. 2 Kings ii. 7-11.	Hymn 505
Re-appearance	{ Matt. xi. 9-11. Matt. xvii. 1-8.	Hymn 133
	Eph. vi. 10-18.	Hymn 439

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION.

English Music.

BY WILLIAM WRIGHT,

Organist of High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham.

WE are frequently told that England is not a musical country. If we trace this assertion to its source we find that it is made by those whose mission it is to propagate foreign music in various forms in our concert-rooms and elsewhere, and from whom we may look in vain for a true appreciation of the characteristics of English music in the forms in which it most naturally presents itself. Whether to be "musical" is to enjoy only the instrumental and operatic music, of which the "music of the future" and kindred modern or "higher" developments mainly consist, is not our present purpose to discuss. Nor do we wish to exclude the study and enjoyment of any good music solely on the ground of its foreign origin. Music is a universal art, and free intercourse of musicians of all countries through the medium of their works can only result in advance and improvement. Still there is danger that, unless we occasionally look inwards and "take stock" of our own national art-work, we may be borne down by the clamour of the disciples of foreign art, and forget that we have a history and

traditions which are kept alive by a worthy band of English musicians.

From the earliest infancy of our nation there can be no doubt that choral music has held the foremost place in the musical inclinations of our people; and in the golden Elizabethan age we know that a man's education was not considered finished unless he could take his part in the exquisite madrigals of that day. The science displayed in these works is still a delight to the educated musician, and their performance is still regarded as a pleasant duty by our vocal societies. Unfortunately, the subsequent Puritan Age checked their production, and almost killed the art with mistaken zeal. To our cathedral musicians we owe a lasting debt for keeping alive the spirit of vocal music. Orchestral music received an impetus by the importation of foreign musicians in the reign of Charles II., but it may be doubted whether it has even yet obtained a firm root amongst us. Let us hope that our newly awakened zeal for the training of players on orchestral instruments may soon result, not only in the more general performance of orchestral music amongst us, but stimulate our native composers to more prolific production of orchestral music, in which some of them have already shown the greatest talent and individuality. When Handel in his later life produced successively the mighty oratorios which, more than any other of his works, will perpetuate his name, he struck the chord of sympathy for sacred music which is innate in the English character. In this field our own native composers have won their best laurels. Mendelssohn's excellence in this department of musical art has endeared him to Englishmen; and though we may not count him as one of ourselves, we tingle with anger when we hear his own countrymen, of the "higher development" school, sneer at the composer of "St. Paul," "Lobgesang," and "Elijah" as "weak" and "wishy-washy."

We believe that the great bulk of the English musical public are true to their instinctive love for choral music—whether in the higher form of oratorio, or in the madrigal, motet, or glee; and we are convinced that those whose opportunity it is to form programmes and select music, will do well and wisely to see that English composers have a fair share of the honours. English music has for its characteristics clear form and coherence; and to our cathedral composers, down to the present day, we are indebted for their adherence to the old contrapuntal traditions of the mighty past. Let us welcome light and freedom in our composers of to-day, but do not let us ignore the fact that the best sacred music of Sullivan, Barnby, Stainer, Mackenzie, Bennett, Smart, and others, is strengthened by counterpoint, and that we may look in vain to the turgid incoherence of the "music of the future" for the healthy enjoyment which we may reap from the performance of a motet like Wesley's "In exitu Israel;" or, to come to later times, the numerous cantatas and oratorios that show the genius and zeal of our modern composers.

Nonconformist organists and choirmasters are not in great danger of being infected by a desire to ignore native compositions, but they may do immense good

by quietly studying the development and history of English music; and in lovingly and reverently securing the best execution within their power of *all* the music they may select. They will find the occasional use of unaccompanied anthems of great use, not only in giving variety to their worship music, but in enforcing the necessity for a well-balanced choir both at rehearsals and services, and in assisting to *restore* a more general taste for unaccompanied vocal music. An important share of the responsibility for our musical progress lies with those on whom devolves the duty of appointing our organists and choirmasters. If they will not only seek, but fairly remunerate, well-trained and thoughtful musicians, our "worship music" will soon more generally merit its name, and be a fit and worthy offering of praise. Thus may the injury done by our Puritan forefathers be effectively repaired, and lasting good be done in the development of truly English music.

A Cry from the Vowels.

WHY do you not treat us aright? What have we done that we should be so fearfully mangled, so grossly misrepresented, frequently completely annihilated, while over our poor bleeding bodies only a few clear-brained and conscientious elocutionists drop a tear, because they know our value? We are compelled to protest, as further patience on our part would simply lead to our complete obliteration. We are so useful, and try to please everybody. Our tempers are excellent, and we are always ready for work. We are full of music, power, strength and variety. We are never dull, never disagreeable, never refuse our best service to anyone who will simply accept it. If we are rightly used we yield fortunes to people and rule worlds. We are small and yet mighty. We are fit for the lisping infant, yet the mightiest orator who shakes the world finds it impossible to get along without us. We are always young, and yet we count centuries. We have been framed and developed by thousands of clever men, and remembering that so much has been done to suit us to everybody's requirements, the grievance is very great that we should not receive more consideration. We do not complain of absolutely ignorant people. Much may be said for such delinquents, as their training and associations have been against that mental clearness which is the best eyesight after all—the higher, safer vision. No, we righteously grumble against people who know better and do badly. We have a beautiful *i*, but how often they completely shut it up. We have a splendid *u*, but we may safely say *you* scarcely ever use it as it should be. As to the *a*, it is so badly treated that it is a wonder this herald of the alphabet does not forsake the language altogether. The *e* is full of ease but one—or millions—must regard it as pregnant with difficulty when we reflect that its existence in nine cases out of ten is shamefully ignored. When we speak of *o*, we are almost inclined to simply ejaculate it, and stop short with an injured look of eloquence. As the *o* has many applications, we may say that the sound indicative of debt is the one we like best, just at present; for this brother of ours has such claims on mankind that the account will never be settled, except by the generosity of the brother who sets such an excellent example by keeping *out of debt* himself. This is a tiny grumble to commence with, but should we not be treated properly, or, at least, with more care in future, our tempers will certainly rise; and we shall be rioters of such a type

that no policeman yet invented will be able to take us all into custody, though one of us may not escape getting into the cell. We raise our cry—two of us are in tears—to be treated as we should; and you will find us so good and useful, that you will never speak without mentioning us.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

BERMONDSEY.—The orchestral band, connected with this Sunday School Union, held their first concert on February 20th, in Rotherhithe Free Church, Mr. G. D. Blyth conducting. The programme included overture, "Samson" (Handel), Haydn's "Surprise" symphony, "March of the Trojans" (Parker), gavottes "Eulalie" and "Theodora," and the march "Athalie," all of which were much applauded. The soloists were: Mrs. G. Matthews, Miss Alice Hart, Mr. Michael Davies, and Mr. George Trotman; Mrs. Blyth and Mr. David Sinclair presiding at the piano and organ. Mrs. Hemans's poem, "The Blind Girl," set to music by the conductor, was rendered with fine effect by Mrs. Matthews, and received much applause from the large audience assembled.

HOLBORN.—The City Temple Orchestral Society gave a very successful concert in the Town Hall on Tuesday, the 11th ult. The vocalists were Madame Belle Cole, Miss Ada Patterson, Miss Amy Wagstaff, Mr. Reginald Groome, Mr. Alexander Tucker—all of whom acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of the large audience. Mr. George Harlow gave a cornet solo, Miss Annie Seckington a pianoforte solo, and Mr. Reed a euphonium solo. The pieces played by the band were Meyerbeer's march, "Le Prophète," overture to "Zampa," a selection from "Maritana," and the march from "Carmen." A general opinion was expressed that the young instrumentalists are making rapid progress. Mr. E. Seckington conducted.

STEPNEY.—Stepney Meeting House was on the 4th ult. the scene of a very pretty and interesting ceremony: the marriage of its highly-esteemed organist, Mr. Ernest W. E. Blandford, to Miss Louisa Eliza Eales, elder daughter of Mr. Richard Smerdon Eales, of Poplar. The bridegroom is well known to our readers as the zealous and genial treasurer of the Nonconformist Choir Union. He is evidently popular at the Meeting House, for a large assemblage of friends and well-wishers gathered to witness the ceremony. The Rev. T. Blandford, of Westgate-on-Sea (father of the bridegroom), assisted by the Revs. E. Hassan, of Salisbury, and J. L. Brooks, of Stepney, conducted the service; and at the close the congregation joined very heartily in singing Monsell's beautiful hymn, "O Love divine and golden!" Mr. J. R. Griffiths presided at the organ, and played the customary "Wedding March" as the happy pair left the building. We heartily wish Mr. and Mrs. Blandford long life and much happiness.

WALWORTH.—On Wednesday evening, February 26th, a performance of Newell's sacred cantata, "The Christian Pilgrim," was given in York Street Congregational Church, by the Clayton Choral Society, under the able conductorship of Mr. A. Daws (organist of the above church). The chair was taken by the pastor, the Rev. P. S. Turquand. The solos were undertaken by Messrs. A. Cook, Mrs. License, Mr. License, and

Mr. Peters, all of whom acquitted themselves very creditably. The choruses were likewise well received. The pianiste was Mr. W. J. Wallis; and Messrs. A. J. W. and P. Cazaby were violinists. Mr. F. C. Harrison gave a good rendering of the choruses on the harmonium.

WESTMINSTER.—A series of "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons for the People," have been given recently at Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, and have attracted large and continually increasing congregations. The building is admirably suited for the purpose, as it seats nearly three thousand people, and contains a very fine organ by Willis. The musical arrangements are under the direction of Mrs. A. J. Layton, F.C.O., who presides at the organ. Selections have been given from the "Messiah," "Elijah," "St. Paul," "Hymn of Praise," "Calvary," "Creation," and "Prodigal Son"; Mendelssohn's Second Psalm for double chorus and double quartette; "Hear my Prayer," etc. The principal soloists have been Miss Kate Cherry, Miss Agnes Maty, Miss Jessie King, Miss Annie Layton, Mr. Howden Tingey, and Mr. A. J. Layton.

PROVINCIAL.

ACCRINGTON.—On Sunday afternoon, the 9th ult., a grand Handelian Choral Service, comprising selections from the popular oratorios, was given in Bethel Baptist Chapel, Barnes Street, and was well attended. The programme reflected considerable credit upon those who contributed. The principals engaged were: Miss Sagar, R.A.M., Church, soprano; Miss E. Pilkington, Accrington, contralto; Mr. John Whittaker, R.A.M., Church, tenor; and Mr. D. L. North, Rawtenstall, bass. Miss Sagar showed to advantage in her clear rendering of the first aria, "Let the bright seraphim" ("Samson"), which was given in faultless manner; and great taste and ability also marked her second contribution, "Angels ever bright and fair" ("Theodora"). Mr. North, too, who made his first appearance in Accrington, created a favourable impression. To his share was allotted the air, "See the raging flame arise" (Joshua), also "The people that walked in darkness," and both were given most commendably. Miss Pilkington sang very sweetly in the air "Thou shalt bring them in" ("Israel") and Mr. Whittaker was likewise successful in his rendering of "Waft her angels" ("Jephthah"). The choruses, rendered by the chapel choir, along with a few friends, were deserving of special mention, and showed evidence of great care in rehearsal, and considerable credit is due to their capable conductor, Mr. Kay. Mr. Edwin Hargreaves, the organist, ably acquitted himself, and contributed no small share to the success of the service.

CLITHEROE.—Mr. W. J. Bennett, the organist of the Congregational Church, has been presented with a marble timepiece on leaving the town.

DERBY.—Farmer's "Christ and His Soldiers" has been given in Victoria Street Chapel.

FRAMLINGHAM.—A new organ has been placed in the Congregational Church.

FROME.—Mr. E. Minshall gave "A Talk on Church Music," in Zion Chapel, on Feb. 27th, to a very large audience. Suggestions were offered for making the hymn-singing more expressive and devotional. Mistakes in chanting were corrected, and anthems were also discussed. A large choir, consisting of representatives of all the Nonconformist choirs in the town, gave the musical illustrations in an excellent manner, under the direction of Mr. W. B. Harvey, who presided at the organ. The congregation joined in some of these illustrations. The Rev. F. W. Clarke, the pastor of the church, presided.

GISBURN.—A new organ, the bequest of the late Mrs. Lund, has been opened in the Wesleyan Chapel.

HASLINGDEN.—On February 26th Stainer's cantata, "St. Mary Magdalen," was performed in Trinity Baptist Chapel, by the choir (assisted by a few friends), before a good audience. The principals were: Soprano, Miss Thornborough, of Blackburn; contralto, Miss Crowther, of Nelson; tenor, Mr. Thornborough, of Blackburn; bass, Mr. Higginson, of Blackburn. Mr. R. H. Haworth, organist of Haslingden Road Chapel, Rawtenstall, presided at the organ; and Mr. Knowles (organist and choir-master) conducted. The proceeds are to be devoted to the completion of the singers' gallery. The principals sang the somewhat difficult music very well, and gave evident pleasure to the listeners. The choir also acquitted themselves creditably, but were rather shaky for a few bars in choruses No. 9 and No. 20. However, taken altogether, the performance was much enjoyed. At the close of it, those who had taken part in the concert, together with a few friends, sat down to supper in the schoolroom, at the invitation of Mr. Knowles. After this was disposed of, the Rev. W. C. Annesley (the pastor of the church) made a few excellent remarks. He thanked very heartily all who had contributed to the evening's entertainment, and said the choir deserved great praise for the trouble they had taken in getting up such a difficult work. He also specially thanked those members of other choirs who had so kindly assisted. He had listened to the singing with very great pleasure, and was sure much good would be done by such performances—as much as, if not more than, by some sermons. The choir-master and one or two others responded, and the proceedings were brought to a close with prayer by the pastor.

HELSTON.—The Wesleyan Circuit Choral Union gave their first performance at the Wesleyan Chapel, on Wednesday, the 5th ult., to a crowded congregation, the Rev. J. E. Hargreaves presiding. A good programme of sacred music was most successfully performed. The organ, ably presided over by Mr. Geo. F. Bond, L. Mus., L.C.M., was fortified by an orchestra consisting of reed and brass instruments, which gave great assistance. An excellent rendering of the "Hallelujah" chorus ("Messiah") brought to a close a most enjoyable evening.

KINGSWOOD (NEAR BRISTOL).—A new organ has been placed in the Congregational Church.

LOSTWITHIEL.—An organ has been placed in the United Methodist Chapel at a cost of £150.

MALDON.—A concert was given in the Congregational Chapel on the 5th ult. Vocal solos were rendered by Mr. Stubbs, of St. George's Chapel, Windsor; and organ solos were played by Mr. W. C. Everett, of Colchester. Mr. Belsham, the organist of the chapel accompanied.

MANCHESTER.—Mons. Eugène Gigout gave an organ recital in Chorlton Road Congregational Church on the 12th ult. The programme was chiefly made up of his own compositions. Vocal solos were given by Miss Helen Maclure and Mr. Tom White.

NEWMARKET.—An excellent two-manual organ of 21 stops, built by Messrs. Norman Brothers & Beard, of Norwich, in the Congregational Church, was opened by Mr. E. Minshall, on Wednesday, the 5th ult. A recital was given in the afternoon, the choir varying the programme by singing three anthems very tastefully. Miss C. Deeks, who has a pleasing voice, sang "Remember now thy Creator," and Mr. H. Hambling gave a rendering of "O rest in the Lord!" In the evening there was a special musical service, comprising two anthems and suitable hymns. Dr. Allon preached an able sermon from the text, "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." After the service Mr. Minshall gave a

second recital. There were large congregations at both meetings.

NORTHAMPTON.—Mr. F. Pentelow, choir-master of Mount Pleasant Chapel, has been presented with a silver-mounted ebony baton and a morocco-bound copy for the "Messiah;" and Mr. W. E. Billingham, the organist, with a clockwork metronome, and two volumes of "The Young Organist," in recognition of their services.

SALE.—On Wednesday evening, the 5th ult., a successful concert was given in the Wesley Schoolroom. The first part comprised an able rendering of Gaul's sacred cantata "Ruth." The choruses were effectively sung by the Wesley Chapel choir, assisted by friends, under the efficient conductorship of Mr. H. Coy, Mus. Doc., Oxon. The soloists included Miss Ada Carr, Miss Storey, Mrs. Styler, and Mr. J. L. Brydon, and in their capable hands the solo portions were given in a very gratifying manner. In the second part, pianoforte solos were skilfully executed by Miss Russell. The songs, "Serenade" and "Come unto Me," were tastefully rendered by Miss Ada Carr, and her clear, sweet voice was heard to the best advantage. The violin solos of Miss Gordon Nunn were a great treat; and the rendering by Mr. J. L. Brydon of "Hybris the Cretan" was highly appreciated. Miss Lewis contributed "Masks and Faces" in very good style.

SANDY.—A sacred concert was recently given in the new Baptist Chapel under the direction of Mr. Why; Miss Why presiding at the pianoforte, and Mrs. Kempe at the harmonium. The programme was an attractive one, and was successfully carried out.

SEDBERGH.—Mr. Frank S. Styler gave an organ recital in the Congregational Church, on the 3rd ult., in aid of the library fund. His programme included selections from Handel, Guilmant, Schubert, Rheinberger, Smart, Mailly, Bach, Kullak, and Lemmens.

STAINES.—The choir of the Congregational Church, assisted by a few friends, rendered Farmer's popular oratorio, "Christ and His Soldiers" with full orchestral accompaniment in the church on Wednesday, the 5th ult. The members of the orchestra were for the most part from Uxbridge, and were efficiently led by Mr. A. Stransom. The choir, numbering fifty-seven voices (of whom fifty are connected with the church), were well under the control of the conductor, Mr. F. D. Morford. The various solos were efficiently rendered by several members of the choir, the contralto soloist being particularly successful. Considering the work was learnt and given in exactly five weeks, severe criticism is hardly fair; but the choir would be capable of giving much more advanced music, if they would carefully watch the beat. The only noticeable fault was one common to most choirs that are not thoroughly trained, namely, hesitation when singing unaccompanied parts and irregularity in the recitatives. However, this being their first venture, we trust to hear of their doing better in the future. The church was well filled, and the proceeds were handed over to the organ fund, for which object the concert was arranged.

TALGARTH.—The Baptist Chapel Choirs of the district recently held a festival. Mr. W. T. Samuel conducted.

THRAPSTON.—"The Captives of Babylon," by Geo. Shinn, was rendered by the Baptist Chapel Choir (assisted by a few friends) and orchestral band, numbering in all forty-five performers, in the Temperance Hall, on Tuesday, the 11th ult. The soloists were Miss Tirrell (Wellingborough), Miss French (Thrapston), Mr. Walter Goody (Wellingborough), and Mr. J. Farey (Rushden). Miss Tirrell, who has a fine soprano voice, sang "Hearken to the Lord Jehovah!" and "Presumptuous Monarch" with taste.

and feeling. Miss French's rich contralto voice was heard to advantage in "A Voice was heard in Ramah." Mr. Walter Goody, who has a sweet and pleasing tenor voice, created a most favourable impression in the airs "Belshazzar reigns" and "Rend your hearts." Mr. Farey was thoroughly at home in his solos, and sang, with suitable expression, the recitative, "Make bright the arrows," and the following air, "O Thou that dwellest!" The choruses went with much spirit, and evinced the careful training from the commencement, especially the following: "The sound of the trumpet is heard," "The thunders of the Lord," and the last chorus, "Break forth into joy." The duet in the latter was splendidly sung by Miss Tirrell and Mr. Goody. The orchestra, who ably performed their part, consisted of the following: Violins, Mr. J. Randall and Mr. A. Richardson; viola, Mr. A. Wright; cello, Mr. J. S. Clipson; basso, Mr. W. Felce; flutes, Mr. A. Berry and Mr. J. Loveday; cornet, Mr. F. S. Knight; piano, Miss Flanders; harmonium, Mr. A. Clark (church organist). Mr. N. Smith jun., the organist, officiated as conductor, and the whole was a decided success, and much enjoyed by an appreciative audience.

TROWBRIDGE.—Mr. E. Minshall gave "A Talk on Church Music" in the Tabernacle on Wednesday, Feb. 26th. After giving a brief history of Nonconformist Church music, he dealt practically with chants, hymns, and anthems. Faults in the congregational singing were pointed out, and illustrations were well rendered by the choir under the direction of Mr. W. Nelson Haden, Mr. A. Millington presiding at the organ.

WARLEY (NEAR HALIFAX).—On Saturday evening, the 8th ult., the choir of the Congregational Church, assisted by a few friends, gave a performance of the music sung at the late Nonconformist Choir Union Festival at the Crystal Palace, interspersed by organ solos by Mr. J. Foulds, organist at Sion Congregational Church, Halifax, who displayed the capabilities of the really excellent instrument to fine advantage. Mr. T. Sutcliffe, the organist and choirmaster, conducted. The result, from a musical point of view, was eminently satisfactory. Mr. William Shaw gave an impressive and pleasing rendering of Mendelssohn's "If with all your hearts." Mr. Shepley was heard with splendid effect in the aria, "O God have mercy!" from Mendelssohn's "St. Paul." Mr. Foulds' recital gave great satisfaction; his selection consisted of "Andante in F" (Reinecke), "War March" (Mendelssohn), "Hymn of Nuns" (Wely), "Andante in G" (Batiste), "Offertoire in D minor" (Batiste), "March Flambeaux" (S. Clark). Mr. Foulds also played the accompaniments with marked precision and taste. The concert, musically, proved a thorough success, and the manner in which the choir acquitted themselves throughout gave evidence of careful training; and they may be fairly congratulated on the character of their evening's work. The proceedings were brought to a close by the Doxology, which was sung in unison, accompanied by varied harmonies on the organ.

Correspondence.

(We shall be glad to receive communications from any of our readers on questions likely to be of general interest.)

SCARCITY OF SINGERS.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—In the interesting account of your visit to Robertson Street Chapel, Hastings, you ask (1) Why

the choir is so small? and (2) Why an anthem is not taken?

These are questions that trouble the organist and choirmaster at many country churches; in fact, at most places it may be said "a choir of double the number is required." Why is there so much difficulty in securing voices?

The organist of a church at a fashionable resort on the south coast recently told me that among his congregation were many who could sing, and who had frequently been invited to join the choir, or at any rate attend the practices, but they persistently refused to do either one or the other, although their help is sorely needed; and this is the complaint at many churches. But why is it? Is it—to put it plainly—because these musical friends (who criticize so freely the singing of the choir) do not care to associate with the assistants in business houses, who constitute so large a proportion of the membership of our country choirs? I hope a more satisfactory answer may be forthcoming.

Then, as to the vexed question of chants and anthems, I have just heard of a choir supplied with the necessary books, which, however, cannot be used on account of the action of some of the church members, who threaten to leave if chants are introduced. These inconsistent individuals join heartily in chanting the words of a C.M. hymn; but, as for treating the Psalms in the same manner, they will have none of it, and would rather leave the church.

How can we deal with such people?—Yours truly,
CHOIRMASTER.

Reviews.

Hymn Tune Voluntaries. By Charles Joseph Frost, Mus. Doc. (Published by the Composer at 88, Tyrwhitt Road, St. John's, London, S.E. Three volumes, 18s. net each.) Dr. Frost has supplied a long-felt want experienced by most church organists. Ordinary congregations do not appreciate Bach's fugues, or any elaborate compositions of that kind. They very much prefer something they know—such as a familiar tune, with variations. Many, perhaps, may regret this fact; but it is true, nevertheless. These volumes, therefore, will be welcomed by many players as a valuable addition to their repertoire. The first volume is before us, and we find the following tunes treated: *Nicæa, Melita, St. Ann, Eventide, St. Matthias, Hollingside, St. Bees, St. Anatolius, Wiltshire, Rockingham, Pilgrims*—in all seventeen numbers, filling one hundred pages. Dr. Frost has purposely kept clear of difficulties, because his object was to write voluntaries that can be played without much preparation. His method of treating the tunes varies; but, as an example, this is how *Melita* is worked out: the melody is given out as a tenor solo accompanied, the first strain is then taken as fugue subject, the other strains being episodically introduced; after dominant pedal and stretto the theme is played over on loud organ, in conjunction with the accompaniment of its first introduction. Organists requiring such voluntaries should send for full particulars of this work.

Original Voluntaries for Organ or Harmonium. By C. H. Swift. Twelve books, 1s. each. (Alphonse Cary, 87, Oxford Street, W.)—Three books are before us, which we may take as a fair sample. The pieces are interesting, and very suitable for church use. To organists who have not much time for practice they are especially valuable. Of this kind of composition they are some of the best we know, being melodious, easy, and yet very effective.

Violin Primer. First Lessons for Young Violinists. By Eugène Polonaski and Frank Roth. (2s. Alphonse Cary.)—A remarkably cheap primer, and as good as it is cheap.

Pianoforte Primer. First Lessons for Young Pianists. (1s. 6d. Alphonse Cary.) Well got up, printed in bold type, and made very interesting for juvenile students.

"Who is this so weak and helpless?" and "A Norwegian Hymn." Two songs by Herbert Stammers. (James Smith & Son, 76, Lord Street, Liverpool.)—The former is written for soprano or tenor voice, with piano and violin accompaniment. It shows considerable musical ability, but the piano accompaniment is somewhat elaborate. The latter is less complicated.

The History of Music. By Emil Naumann. Translated by F. Praeger. (Cassell & Co., London.)—This interesting and valuable work, which is being issued in 41 monthly parts, has now reached Part 24. To both professional and amateur musicians this is a most useful work.

Twelve Anniversary Hymns. Set to music by Emily B. Farmer. (Joseph Williams, 24, Berners Street, W. 1d. each, or complete in paper cover, 6d.)—Superintendents frequently have a difficulty in finding nice hymns with "taking" tunes that are suitable for Sunday School anniversary services. These twelve tunes—which are printed in Old Notation and Sol-fa combined—will be a boon. The tunes are all well written and are very varied in style. "Little Drops of Water," "Forward, Children, forward!" and "Raise your Songs," will certainly be popular.

The Music Student's Examiner. By J. Clift Wade. (Goth & Gomme, 28 & 29, Bouverie Street, E.C. 1s.)—A useful little book of 40 pp., containing questions on the rudiments of music, and divided into appropriate sections.

To Correspondents.

A. H. B.—We think the word should be sung as if it were two syllables.

F. S. T.—Yes.

G. L.—It contains a difficult bass solo.

A. R.—Next month.

O. S.—There is no subscription, but choirs have to purchase their own music.

H. N.—It is published in Novello's Octavo Anthems.

The following are thanked for their letters: T. B. (Northampton), W. T. (Birmingham), A. D. (Lincoln), F. G. (Kendal), W. S. (Bristol), P. T. (Newport), A. L. (Edinburgh), S. M. (Dulwich), F. E. (Peckham), J. J. (Kentish Town).

Staccato Notes.

THE Staffordshire Musical Festival will take place at Hanley, commencing October 1st. Dr. Heap will conduct.

MASTER F. SHARPLES, the youngest F.C.O., is only fifteen years of age.

"THE Cottar's Saturday Night," by Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, has been given by the Royal Choral Society.

MR. HAMISH McCUNN's cantata "Bonny Kilmeny," was given at the Crystal Palace on the 8th ult.

MR. JOHN GILL, the esteemed secretary of the Royal Academy of Music, has resigned.

MR. H. C. DEACON, well-known as a teacher of singing, died the last week in February.

THE Welsh Service at St. Paul's Cathedral on February 28th was a great success. The music was under the direction of Mr. Dyved Lewys.

THE 152nd Anniversary of the Royal Society of Musicians was celebrated on the 4th ult., at St. James's Hall.

DR. H. WYLDE, Principal of the London Academy of Music, is dead.

Accidentals.

BISHOP TEMPLE relates that when he was once worshipping in an East End Church, where a hearty musical service is a distinguishing feature, he joined in the singing to the best of his ability. He has a stentorian voice, and the effect of his efforts on those sitting near him may be imagined. At the conclusion of the second verse of the hymn, the patience of a working man on his immediate left seemed fairly exhausted. Not recognizing the dignitary beside him, the poor man, in sheer desperation, gave the Bishop a sharp dig in the ribs, and the latter, on turning for an explanation, was thus addressed in subdued but distinct tones: "I say, gub'n'r, you dry up, you're spoiling the whole show."

AN organist says that a cow moos in a perfect fifth, octave, or tenth; a dog barks in a fifth or fourth; a donkey brays in a perfect octave; and a horse neighs in a descent on the chromatic scale.

SYMPATHETIC OLD LADY: "Oh dear! I do so feel, Mabel, for that poor man with the long trumpet—" (she must mean the trombone in the street band); "all through the piece, dear, he's been trying to fix it right, and he can't do it, poor fellow!"

CAUGHT.—A young man who wished to send some complimentary verses to a beautiful lady whose singing at a concert had pleased his fancy, asked an impecunious friend, who was a brilliant rhymester, to compose them for him. The result pleased him greatly, and he copied them and sent them to the lady as the "outcome of an idle moment, from yours, ———." The next day they were returned, with an interrogation mark under his name. To his chagrin he found that he had used a sheet of paper without noticing that his friend, who had called when he was out, had scrawled across the back the following: "Dear J.—, I cannot let you have the last verses to Miss B. for less than ten shillings. Please be more prompt than you were last time."

SOME years ago at a chapel in Essex the leader of the choir came without his glasses. The first tune chosen was *Cambridge New*. Suddenly he said (hymn-book in hand)—

"My eyes, indeed, are getting blind;
I cannot see at all."

The choir, thinking the words were the first two lines of the hymn, struck up and sang them to the above tune; the old gentleman, waxing wrathful and indignant, gave utterance to two more lines, as follows:

"I really think you all are mad
A plague upon you all."

The choir, nothing daunted, vigorously sang them through, to the consternation of the congregation.